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Agenda item 4

ACTION ARISING FROM THE SECOND SESSION

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur Ms. Marina RANGA (Romania)

Chapter ...

Chairman's summary of the general discussion

1. The Commission evaluated positively the note of the secretariat on the implementation of decisions of its second session. In the course of the discussion, additional information was provided on the issue of implementation of the Commission's decisions by some members of the Commission and representatives of secretariats of some bodies of the United Nations system, particularly in such areas as coalition of resources, poverty alleviation, rural industrialization, strengthening of research and development systems and technological capabilities in developing countries, integrated land management, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and development of energy systems.

The opinion was expressed by one delegation that the abolition of the Senior Advisers on Science and Technology of the Economic Commission for Europe created an additional responsibility for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. The Commission considered it useful to continue monitoring developments in the area of science and technology.

Scientific and technological aspects of sustainable energy systems

2. The Commission considered the secretariat's note on this topic (E/CN.16/1997/3), which had been prepared at the request of the Commission at its second session. The topic was also discussed under agenda item 8 on future work. During the substantive discussion of the secretariat's note under item 4, a number of general as well as more specific comments were made. In considering energy as a substantive topic, it was vital to take into account a number of pertinent issues such as the uneven distribution of fuel and energy resources, the interactive management of energy, energy savings, the problems relating to biomass sources from contaminated forests and the need for a total energy system, and the special needs of small island countries.

3. More generally, it was noted that energy was an important issue that could not be ignored by the Commission. However, efforts should be made to ensure that duplication was avoided within the United Nations system. The need for coordination of energy-related activities undertaken by United Nations bodies and organizations was vital.

The budget and inter-sessional activities of the Commission

4. The Commission expressed appreciation for the contributions of the Bureau, experts and the secretariat to the intersessional work of the Commission. It also expressed its appreciation to Governments and organizations which had contributed financial resources to support the Commission's style of work, involving the setting-up of panels and working groups to deal with specific issues identified for further consideration.

5. Some members stressed that a provisional work programme and budget should be circulated to members of the Commission at the beginning of the new inter-sessional period and that, for the purposes of transparency, the secretariat should continue to provide progress reports on both the work programme and its financial aspects at six-month intervals. The provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Commission should also reflect the members' wish that an item dealing with the budget be included.

6. Members of the Commission also emphasized the need to make use of the competences available within the secretariat, whenever possible.